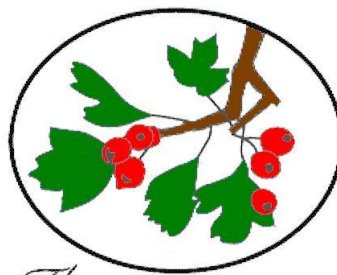


Welcome to the Hawthorns Primary School Governors' Newsletter 2017 as we near the end of another strong year for the school.

The end of the summer term is approaching, and it's time again to look back over the academic year from the governors' perspective, and to look ahead a little to the year to come.

One of the main topics of my newsletter piece last year was the school budget and the pressures upon it. Little has altered here and the level of funding for the coming years is still not certain. One thing that has changed however is the recognition of our funding situation amongst the community. Parents have added their voice to raise awareness of the low level of funding in Wokingham schools to the media and government, for which we are grateful. Donations to the school are also a massive help,



The
**Hawthorns
Primary School**

as is the continued fundraising organised by the PTA and supported so well by our families.

Also mentioned in last year's newsletter was the commencement of work towards conversion to academy status. Work here has gathered pace, and a working party of governors has met several times with various local school groups to explore the opportunities available to us. When this process does take place, most of the change will be at a leadership and governance level. You are unlikely to see a great deal of change on a day-to-day basis in the school, however your children



and the school community as a whole will benefit from the opportunities provided by more formal collaboration with local schools. There will be more to come on this during the next school year as our options become clearer, and there will of course be a consultation with the school's community before a final decision is made.

You will have seen the very complimentary Ofsted report received in May. This report reflects a school environment created by everyone working together: staff, parents, carers, pupils, helpers, leadership team, PTA and Governors. Thank you to you all.

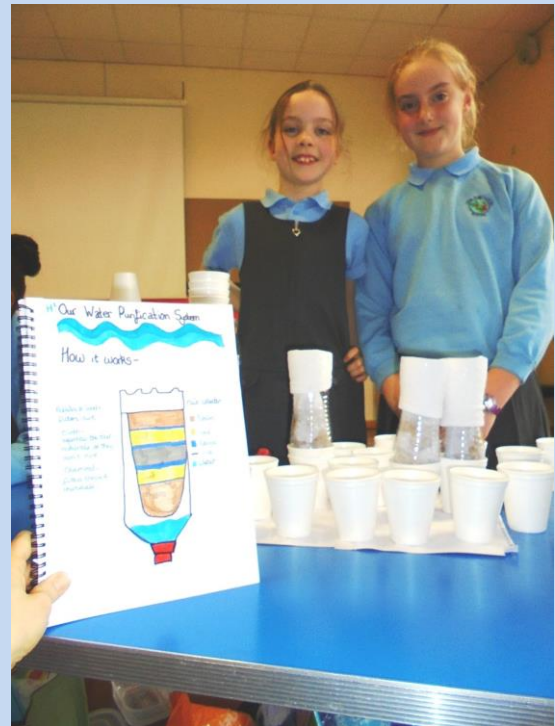
G o v e r n o r s ' N e w s l e t t e r 2 0 1 7

Some of our teaching staff will be leaving us at the end of this term. Mrs Marilyn Walker is leaving for a well-earned retirement, and Mr Matt Jex is leaving for an equally well-deserved promotion to deputy headship at a local school. After two terms of covering in year 4, Mrs Mary Coffield will be leaving us again but I am sure we will see her around on supply. Mrs Claire Fawkes is off to pastures new. Our thanks and best wishes go with all of them.

Finally, on a personal note, I am nearing the end of my second four year term as a governor at the Hawthorns and, whilst I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as governor and chair, the time has come for me to step aside. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole school community for their support over the past eight years, in particular Pat Kerton and the senior leadership team, my fellow governors, and Sarah Izquierdo for her tireless work as Clerk to the Governors.

I am very pleased that Judith Shepherd will be taking over the role of Chair of Governors. Judith has been involved with the school for a long time, and I am sure will do a fantastic job of leading a strong team of governors who are very committed to the Hawthorns school, both in terms of the time they freely give, and their desire for the Hawthorns school to be an excellent setting for the education of our children. Please do give them your full support. As always, there are changing and challenging times ahead!

Chris Shaw
Chair of Governors



Judith Shepherd
Chair of Sites and Buildings and Health and Safety

This is the end of my seventh year as a School Governor. The year has flown and yet again has been very busy and so enjoyable.

I remain as Chair of Sites and Buildings / Health and Safety.

Money as we all know is tight, so we have had very little to spend. Thanks to the hard work of the PTA, we have been able to make some purchases and carry out some improvement work around the school and grounds, which would otherwise have been impossible. Thank you.

A special thank you to our Site Manager, Mr Graham Gill, who can turn his hand to so many skills. His hard work, be it decorating, carpentry, plumbing (to name just a few) has saved the school so much money. I know that he is proud to be part of the Hawthorns and it shows. Thank you!

Health and Safety plays a huge part in the running of the school to ensure the children are in a safe and comfortable place. Thank you to all the staff for playing their part, especially Mrs Tyrrell who ensures that all necessary checks and policies are kept up to date.

I attend Governor Meetings throughout the year, and really enjoy being involved with the children on school activities. To pick out a few

As Sports Governor, I have accompanied the



Cross Country Club to a number of their races, acting as a marshall. What a great year they have had. Two cups have been won this season. The school came third overall and the year 3-4 boys came second in a league of nine teams. Well done to everyone!

The year 3-4 boys also got medals for coming third in the cross-country relay in a field of forty teams.

Thank you to Mrs McKay, Mrs Pritchard, Mrs Nandra, Mrs Anne Davis and Mrs Nicola Davies for their dedication. Mrs Watkins, Mrs Belton and Mrs Thompson who are all former members of staff have all volunteered their services to help too.



Mrs Pritchard and Mrs Robertson have organised a 'run a mile' incentive for years 3-6. One hundred children signed up and they run each Monday and Wednesday before school, over the weeks clocking up a mile. Such a great idea, which I know will take place again next year.

Football, athletics, kwik cricket are just a few of the other sports enjoyed by the children.

I joined Year 5 on their visits to Kennett Court. Once to take Harvest Boxes and then to entertain at Christmas. I know that everyone there looks forward to these two occasions. The children enjoyed chatting to the elderly residents, plus they sang and played musical instruments. It was a joy to see!

The highlight of my year has to be joining Year 6 on their residential trip to the Isle of Wight. It was my fourth time as a Governor Volunteer and I just love it! This year was particularly special as 'my class' who I have been linked to since Year 2 suddenly became Year 6! It was wonderful to see how they have grown up. The enthusiasm, happiness and friendship that they all shared was just fantastic. They faced challenges, pushed themselves, overcame fears, encouraged each other and each one of the Year 6 children should be so proud of themselves. I wish them so much happiness as they move on to senior school.

So... as another school year comes to an end, I look forward to next year at the Hawthorns. A school I am very proud to be a part of.

Elizabeth Bridgeman
Staff & Humanities Governor

2016-17 has been an eventful year for me as Governor. My four-year term as staff Governor came to an end but luckily for me no one else was able to take on the role so I continue.

In this capacity, I am able to attend the Parent Forum and I would like to thank those Year group parent representatives who do such sterling work on behalf of their classes in putting forward views and ideas, which I know the school appreciate. It is great to have such a supportive forum and be able to have very honest discussions in the current financial climate that schools find themselves in.



The highlight of the year was of course Governors Day and our assembly, which involved some excellent acting by Governors in a play, entitled "The Chocolate Mystery". The cliff hanger ending led to a whole school writing exercise, which required the children to finish the story. Each Governor then had to look at the stories and select winners from each class who later received a prize. Luckily, the task of reading the stories was spread among the Governors team but picking winners was very challenging indeed and did require some consultation between us. It was great to see how writing develops during the time at our school and we certainly have some potential authors in our midst.

This was my first time as a Governor to be really involved in the Ofsted visit and I must praise all the staff for their hard work to maintain our "Good". It was a "stressful" day but interesting to see how all the work behind the scenes as well as in the classrooms comes together on the day of the visit. Well done and thanks to all the parents who completed the survey for Ofsted.

I hope everyone has a lovely summer and I am looking forward to continuing in my role next year.



Matt Jex **Website Compliance**

This year has been my third as a co-opted Governor, attending full governing body meetings as well as sitting on the personnel and finance committee.

It has been a challenging year, ensuring the interests of the children remain central to all that we do and the difficult decisions we have had to make. I have also been ensuring the school's website is compliant and that content on the website is current.

Part of my role is feeding back relevant information to school staff and supporting fellow governors in understanding the everyday workings of the school.

The governors really do give up a lot of time to support the school and I know that we, as staff, are extremely appreciative of this. It is lovely to work in a school where the governors have such a visible presence and are well known to the children.

This will also be my final year as a governor at the Hawthorns and I will miss the school very much. I wish the children, staff, parents and governors all the best for the future.

Dawn Wojcik **Co-opted governor**

Hello to you all. Another busy year in the Hawthorns calendar and my second year in this position as co-opted staff governor.

Time has just flown by this year and I have enjoyed being involved in many great events and activities throughout the year.

With the whole school, I have been involved with the two school fairs, helping to man refreshments at the Christmas fair and more recently on the barbecue at the amazing summer fair.

I am class governor to 6HM and have enjoyed spending time with them on trips and in lessons. I very much enjoyed the trip to the rowing museum in Henley early on this academic year. I have enjoyed spending time in class while they study a wide curriculum of subjects.

I am so impressed by how they have grown as a year group as I was a TA for this particular cohort when they first joined the school, in reception class. I had a great time helping with Breakfast club during SATS week and the icing on the cake was to finally embark on a Year 6 residential trip, after all these years being involved in the school in one way or another. It was a superb week and the children did us proud. We had the most glorious weather and everyone got involved with much enthusiasm and had a wonderful time.

It has been a very rewarding year. I continue to be a member on both the Sites and Buildings committee and Learning and Teaching committee. I look forward to another great year next year and I will be starting from the bottom again with the new 2017 intake in September.

Hawthorns continues to be a wonderful place to work and serve.



Dozie Nnabuike
Co-opted Governor, Chair of Teaching and Learning committee, Safeguarding Governor, Science Governor

It has been another eventful year as a school governor. During the year, I continued to attend the Learning and Teaching, Personnel and Finance, and Site and Building committees' meetings. I have also taken up new roles as the Chair of the Learning and Teaching committee, a Safeguarding and Science Governor. It was quite exciting and challenging with lots of catching up. I also attended several training courses at Wokingham Borough Council offices.

I had a wonderful time with my adopted class 3WE during the governor's day where I sat with them during the essay writing exercise and I judged the writing exercise for year 3.

As a Safeguarding governor, I was also in the school for a safeguarding audit for effective safeguarding.

I have also developed over the year as a governor- a more efficient skill in manning the hot section of a large barbeque stand during the just concluded PTA summer fair after shadowing Mr Shaw last year. My previous competency was for a smaller family barbeque.

I led a group of volunteers to run the Imagineering club for Year 6. This is a weekly school club that introduces school children to the fascinating world of engineering and technology through fun, hands-on activities and projects.

I intend to continue working with the rest of the Governors, the School management and staff to positively impact The Hawthorns Primary School.



Rosie Beech
SEND and Literacy Governor

We Governors have had another busy and interesting year. As SEND Governor, I have attended forums run by Wokingham Council to keep up to date with developments and good practice for our SEND pupils. I have also met with our school SENCo and I know how much work goes on to help these children achieve the best possible outcomes, using well-focused support available from within the school and from outside agencies.

As Literacy Governor, I have met with our Literacy Co-ordinator and have learned of strategies being used to inspire writing throughout the school. So, in our Governors' Assembly we had fun contributing a little to this initiative by acting part of an adventure story, leaving it at a cliff-hanger, for the children to complete later. I was most impressed by the quality and variety of endings they produced.

In April, I was privileged to take part in the interviews for Leaders of Standards and afterwards felt inspired and reassured by the high quality and talent of the candidates. The good Ofsted Report confirmed that we are indeed fortunate to have so many good dedicated and hard-working members of staff whatever their role.

Being a Governor is undoubtedly a privilege and there are many enjoyable moments too. I have seen how knowledgeable and well-behaved our children are on school trips, I have kept my mathematical skills honed by helping out at school fairs and I have had some great conversations with children while working in the library.



Ian Severn
Computing and e-Safety Governor

The PTA continue to be very supportive by ensuring that all classrooms now have an interactive smart screen. However, the major changes to our IT environment is the introduction of a wireless network. We are continuing to look to the future to see how we can introduce mobile devices into the classroom. Children in the Early Years are coming into school with a new set of IT skills that makes them unfamiliar with the traditional PC world. We therefore need to ensure that the most appropriate devices are available in school that will help with their educational development.

We are now embracing social media with the recent introduction of our very own Hawthorns Facebook page.

We continue to be concerned about the eSafety of the children - whilst we are very conscientious in school to ensure that the children have safe access to the Internet - we hope that this is true when they are at home where YOU as parents and guardians have overall control of their IT environment?

[CLICK HERE](#) to access some recommended eSafety links on the school website.



Emma Kerr
Vice Chair and Maths Governor

My term as a parent governor is flying by, and I'm already approaching the end of my third year. It remains an extremely interesting and rewarding role, the highlight of which is always spending time in school with the children, seeing them grow as they move up through the school.

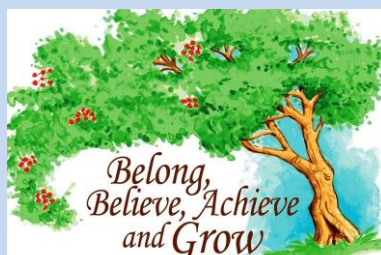
This has been a very tough year for the school in terms of balancing budgets, and I remain in awe of how hard the team at Hawthorns work to do the very best for our children with the very limited funds they have available to them.

My visits into the school have included helping make clay pots with the reception children for mother's day, along with art sessions and Christmas lunch with my adopted class 1AF. I've seen a number of amazing performances throughout this school year, most recently the year 1 "Where the wild thing are", which was truly fantastic and am so proud to be part of such a wonder school, with such talented children and staff.

As Maths governor I have had the pleasure of working alongside the maths subject leaders, who continue to work tirelessly to ensure that the maths curriculum is fully incorporated throughout the school. It was wonderful talking to children about Maths and their thoughts on the subject and its importance, when we completed the subject learning walk in the spring term. Thanks to Mr Jex and Miss Woolley for doing such a fantastic job!

I look forward to another enjoyable and successful year ahead for our children, and would like to wish the current year 6 group, our famous 'bulge year', every success as they move on to their chosen Secondary schools in September. The school will certainly miss them!

The School Governors would like to say 'Thank You' to everyone who works so hard for the benefit of the children at The Hawthorns Primary School, especially the Senior Leadership Team, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, office staff, Mr Gill the Site Manager, lunchtime controllers, kitchen staff and the PTA.



Governor vacancy

The Hawthorns school governors would like to appoint a new governor from the local community in the autumn term. Are you or do you know anyone in the local area who might be interested? There is no requirement for educational expertise; neither do you need to be a parent of a child at the school. What you do need is an interest in local education and some time, energy and enthusiasm. Being a governor can be a really rewarding experience and there is a range of free training available.

More information will be made available in September.

If you think you may be interested email: governors@hawthorns.wokingham.sch.uk

